SKETCHES

AND

FRAGMENTS.

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

"THE MAGIC LANTERN."

Sketches sometimes possess an interest that is often not to be found in more finished performances.

Critique on the Art of Painting.

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PREFACE.

WHEN "The Magic Lantern" was laid before the public, it was deemed too trifling to require a preface. The present little volume might for the same reason appear without one, did not the animadversions to which that bagatelle has given rise render it necessary to disclaim the personal satire attributed to the Sketches it contains.

Had personality been the author's aim, London offers so many highly

coloured pictures, which to be known need only to be seen, that the most unskilful artist might succeed in giving copies, whose resemblance would strike every beholder; but as general and not personal satire was the object in view, it is a source of regret that the shadows reflected in "The Magic Lantern" have been considered as likenesses of persons, of whose very existence the author was almost ignorant.

This proves the truth of the sentiment in Gay's song: —

"When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
If you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries — that was levelled at me."

Of the present little volume, the author knows not what to say. Its contents are strictly what its title designates them—Sketches and Fragments. Wentworth was commenced while "The Magic Lantern" was in the press, and ere its author was aware of the danger of sketching even imaginary characters. But now, fearful of treading on ground where every step may be deemed an encroachment on a neighbour, it is doubtful whether the story will ever be finished, and therefore it takes its place in this volume as a fragment. The author dares scarcely indulge a hope that the trifles which compose the present work

will please; but as they do not contain any allusions that can be considered personal, it may reasonably be hoped that they will not offend.

12th June, 1822.

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BLIGHTED HOPES.

It was on a lovely evening towards the end of July, that we approached the village of Effingham. My friends, Lord and Lady Merton, their lovely invalid daughter, and myself, occupied a large family coach, which was followed by another containing the domestics. The sun was setting in all the magnificence of a summer's sky, and every object, even to the pallid cheek of the languid Ellen, was tinged with his golden rays. I saw her close her eyes, and put one hand over them, as if to shut out the cheering

beams that so ill accorded with her feelings; and my heart bled at the conviction, that one so young, so lovely, and so loved, was insensible to all emotions but those of grief;—that sorrow had chilled her warm bosom, and nipt the roses of health which had so lately bloomed on her now death-like cheek. We proceeded slowly along, the afflicted parents watching with agonized anxiety the countenance of their only child, who occasionally, when gleams of returning consciousness rendered her sensible of their anguish, expressed, by a gentle pressure of their hands to her heart or lips, or a look that spoke more eloquently than words, the sense which she felt of their affection.

We now approached the church-yard, and all our fears were excited, dreading the effect which its appearance might produce

upon Ellen. A few weeks before, her betrothed husband was consigned to the silent grave in this very cemetery, and the family mausoleum was close to the road. The disconsolate parents appeared afraid to breathe, lest they should disturb the mourner from a fit of abstraction into which she had fallen a few minutes before; when at the very moment we reached the spot, she bent forward, extended her hands towards the mausoleum, and uttering one heart-piercing shriek, fell back, fainting in the arms of her mother.

Three short months before, I accompanied the same group to London. The parents were then happy in the prospect of bestowing their only child on the object of her long-cherished affection,—an object not less their choice than hers. The lovely Ellen was

then blooming, beautiful, and gay, and redolent with joyful anticipations of meeting her future husband. Every mile we travelled brought her nearer to the object of her love; and well do I remember the suffusion of her cheek, when bantered by her doating, happy father, on the visible exhilaration of her spirits. Happy herself, how did she, by a thousand nameless graces and kindnesses, endeavour to extend the sunshine of her own pure breast. I looked at her, and beheld her radiant with innocence, and joy, and beauty; and I fancied, that had a Lawrence seen her, he would have immortalized himself and her, by pourtraying her as the personification of Hope; for never surely had the bright-eyed enchantress a more lovely representative.

When we arrived in Grosvenor-square,

the lover was at the door, with all a lover's impatience marked in his eager glance and sparkling eyes; while her first look of rapture was succeeded by a more chastened and timid, though not less tender manner.

Days succeeded days, which, though mingled with the oft-repeated chidings of the impetuous lover at the " law's delay," were still days of happiness. Tender attentions, bridal preparations, plans for future enjoyments and present amusements, enriched and varied each day, until the long-wished-for one was named that was to unite them. But four days prior to that which was to consummate their happiness, the lover was seized with an illness, which he considered a slight cold, and neglected, being unwilling to absent himself even for a few hours from his mistress: the second day he was unable to leave his bed; and the third

his illness was pronounced past hope — past cure; — the fourth, — that day for which he had so ardently longed, as the goal of his happiness, — he was a corpse.

For many days insanity, caused by a violent brain-fever, banished from poor Ellen's mind all sense of her misfortune and sorrow. In all the wanderings of distempered fancy, her lover was never for a moment absent from her thoughts: she called on him in the tenderest accents, addressed him with all the fervour of affection, and again and again implored him not to leave her couch while she slept; for that he alone could shield her from some unknown enemy, that pressed her forehead with a burning hand.

By slow degrees Reason resumed her empire; but it was visible that health had for ever fled. Her first request to her sorrow-

ing, heart-stricken parents, was to take her to Merton Park. Oh! what a contrast is there between this melancholy return and our happy journey three short months ago! Our hearts were then cheered by Hope; but now, Hope is banished, and Resignation to the will of HIM, "who chasteneth whom he loveth can alone enable them to bow to HIS dispensation."

* * * * * *

At length the lovely and gentle Ellen is released from her sorrows; and her pure soul has fled to those regions of bliss, where tears are dried and grief endureth no more. I this day beheld her pale corse consigned to "the narrow house," and I now see from my window the moon's silver beams reflected on the mausoleum that inurns her.

For three days after our arrival she lin-

gered between life and death. A few hours before she breathed her last, she became conscious of her situation, and hailed her approaching death as a release from hopeless, cureless anguish. A faint smile, the first that had appeared since her lover's decease, played on her pallid lips, but was soon chased away by observing the unuttered and unutterable grief of her parents. For a few minutes she regarded them with looks of fondest, pitying love; and with all the daughter in her eyes, "the big tears chasing each other down" her pale cheek, as their sorrow and desolation at her loss glanced over her mind, she wept for some time with uncontrollable emotion; and, alternately turning to each, as they jointly supported her, tremulously clasped them in her embrace. But the God of Mercy, "who tempereth the wind to the

shorn lamb," soon restored a saintly calm to the dying Ellen.

She seemed inspired with more than mortal eloquence, while addressing her unhappy parents, and soothing their minds into resignation at her approaching fate, she begged to be taken to the window, that she might once more behold the fair face of nature, and view the spot where she was so soon to be laid beside him whom she had so fondly loved.

We bore her couch to the window, and for a moment the fresh air seemed to revive her. The sun was rising with a splendour that gave the promise of a glorious day, and all nature seemed waking into life and gladness: she looked towards that brilliant luminary for a few moments in silence, and then exclaimed, "Ah! long before that

bright orb sinks in the west, the vital spark that animates this frail form shall become extinct; never, never again shall those eyes behold the refulgent sun, or shall I bask beneath his cheering beams. Those woods and hills, on which so oft I have delighted to gaze; yon river, by whose banks I have so often strayed, that dewy lawn, over which my careless feet have so often wandered, — I shall never again behold. That sun will again rise in all his wonted splendor, and this lovely landscape will still retain its charms, but I — I shall be insensible to all ——." Here her sweet countenance became clouded with sorrow, and a few natural tears rolled down her cheek: but turning to the point that commanded a view of the village church, whose spire the rays of the sun were now irradiating, she ceased to

weep; and raising her almost transparent hand, said, "There, there, by his side let me be laid; and now, oh my loved parents, pray that your child may meet death with the composure and piety of a Christian."

She held a hand of each parent; while with her eyes closed, as if to shut out all earthly objects, she prayed with fervour. She appeared exhausted, and her voice became less articulate. A gentle sleep seemed to steal over her: but it was the sleep of death; for breathing one soft sigh, she resigned her soul into the hands of her Creator.

MARRIAGE.

"PRUDENCE and benevolence are the qualities most likely to promote happiness in the marriage state; but what can be expected except disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth—without judgment—without foresight—without enquiry after conformity of opinions—rectitude of principle, or purity of sentiment?"

> Hymen, thy chain is galling when it binds
> Unsuited hearts, and ill-assorted minds.

"Never, never can I give my hand where my whole heart does not accompany it," ex-

claimed the animated and sensitive Louisa to her friend, Mrs. Delamere, who had been advising her to accept, or at least to take into consideration, the proposal of Mr. Beaumont, made a few days before.

"If, by that warm expression, you mean that you will never marry any man for whom you do not feel a decided preference, I approve of your determination," said her friend; "but, my dear Louisa, I fear that it means more, and that you must, as the modern phrase is, *fall* in love, before you can bring yourself to think of marriage. The very expression denotes a degradation; as in Johnson we find one of the definitions of the verb *to fall* is, 'to enter into any state worse than the former.' Our Hibernian neighbours have improved the mode of expression, by calling it 'tumbling into love;' but, to be

serious, how unfit is a person in love to form a just estimate of the character, principles, pursuits, and tastes, of the object of affection, as it is allowed that no veil is so impenetrable as that of love; though, when once removed, every blemish is rendered painfully obvious."

"All this may be correct, my dear friend," replied Louisa; "but there is no reasoning on affairs of the heart." This was said with a tone and emphasis that showed Louisa's wish to end the argument; and so the subject concluded. Mr. Beaumont was refused the next day; and in a short time after, Louisa, throwing herself into the arms of her friend, hid her blushing face in her bosom, and told her that she was now the happiest of women, for that Lord Tynedale, who had long been the object of her admiration, had declared

his passion, and was a suitor for her hand. Mrs. Delamere knew little of Lord Tynedale, but that little led her to believe he was unsuited to form the happiness of her friend; and she therefore pointed out the necessity of caution and length of acquaintance, before entering a state that was unalterable, and on which the comfort or misery of Louisa's life would depend. But Louisa having, as she emphatically expressed it, *fallen in love*, would hear no arguments that militated against her wishes; and being her own mistress, she soon became the wife of Lord Tynedale.

"The happy pair," according to newspaper phraseology, left town immediately after the ceremony was performed, for the Grove, one of the seats of the bridegroom; and during the honey-moon, Mrs. Delamere heard fre-

quently from her friend, who pronounced her dear Tynedale the most charming of men, and herself the happiest of women. By degrees the wife became much less rapturous in her praises of her husband, and shortly after complained of the dulness of the country, the want of society, and, above all, the want of complaisance in Lord Tynedale, and requested that her friend would take compassion on her forlorn state, and pay her a visit. Mrs. Delamere, who felt deeply interested in Lady Tynedale's happiness, determined on accepting the invitation, and in a few days after set off for the Grove. She found her friend pale, languid, and dispirited, with scarcely a vestige of her former animation; and the first moment they were alone, and free from interruption, Lady Tynedale, with a torrent of tears, declared herself the most

deceived and wretched of her sex; and again and again deplored that she had not attended to her friend's counsels. Lord Tynedale, she said, was cold, unfeeling, and tasteless, and possessed not a single ray of genius, or talent. They had no sentiments or pursuits in common, and his society was irksome to her. He saw that she was tired to death of the Grove, and yet he seemed insensible to all her often reiterated wishes to leave it.

Mrs. Delamere soothed her with kind words, but declined giving any opinion on so delicate a point until she had an opportunity of judging by Lord Tynedale's conduct, how far the causes of complaint were well-founded. She was grieved, though not surprised, at hearing so lamentable an account, and gently reminding her friend of her former observation, that when the veil of love was removed, every

error was magnified, she asked what was the deception her friend alluded to when she stated herself to be the most deceived of women. This question produced fresh emotion in Lady Tynedale, who rejoined, "Did he not appear to sympathize in all my tastes, take an interest in every thing that I said or did, and appear to live only for me? He was never happy out of my sight, and his sole study was to please me; while now he seems only intent on pursuing his own gratification, wholly regardless of mine."

"But are you quite sure," replied Mrs. Delamere, "that there was no deception practised on your side; no exaggeration of feeling; no professions of being passionately fond of the country: in short, did you not lead him to believe that his views in life entirely assimilated with your own?"

The heightened colour on the cheek of Lady Tynedale betrayed a little indignation, as well as consciousness of the truth of this statement; but she would not plead guilty, as she persisted in saying, "she would still have preferred the country to town, provided her husband had still continued the lover."

Lord Tynedale, though a well-bred man, possessed a naturalness of manner that rendered it difficult for him to conceal his sentiments. It was plain to Mrs. Delamere, that in her he expected a harsh critic of his domestic conduct, and this tinged his deportment with a shade of coldness that made him appear in no very favourable point of view. Still the most minute observation could discover nothing more than coldness to find fault with, and it was evident to Mrs. Delamere that this was more assumed than natural; and probably

had its origin in disappointment and pique He appeared of a serious turn, fond of study and rural occupations, well-informed, but wanting imagination, and that refined tone of high feeling which could lead him to appreciate, or sympathize with, his wife's sensibility and warmth of heart. He seemed insensible to the dejection which she frequently betrayed; and equally so to the brilliant sallies in which she occasionally indulged, whenever former scenes and companions were the topic of conversation; and yet Mrs. Delamere soon became convinced that this apparent insensibility was not caused by any want of affection for Lady Tynedale, but was partly produced by dissatisfaction at her visible want of deference to his opinions, and her turn for ridicule. When Lady Tynedale's beautiful face was clouded with an air of

pensive melancholy, that she thought irresistible, he studiously avoided looking at her, which provoked her beyond all endurance, and she used to endeavour to draw Mrs. Delamere's attention to those personal slights whenever they occurred. But when she gave utterance to some stroke of poignant satire that she deemed certain of extracting applause, his face of immoveable gravity enraged her beyond the power of controlling her temper; and on those occasions not all the beseeching looks of her friend could prevent her sarcastic observations on dull people who could not understand a joke, nor discover the point of an epigram.

Weary of witnessing irritations that appeared to increase every day, and finding that advice was quite lost on her friend, Mrs. Delamere bade adieu to the Grove,

much to the regret of its mistress; and Lord Tynedale, who had lately begun to discover her excellent qualities, cordially pressed her to extend her visit, though he acknowledged, and a sigh escaped him while he did so, that the society at the Grove was so triste, that it had no attractions to induce her to prolong her stay.

Mrs. Delamere longed to speak to him on the subject next her heart, and to point out how much his coldness offended her friend, but delicacy and a dread of being thought to interfere, closed her lips, and she left the Grove with a painful conviction that its owners had little prospect of happiness, unless a total change took place in their views and conduct, and of this she saw no immediate probability.

As she pursued her journey to town, her

mind reverted to the scene which she had lately witnessed; she reflected on the many amiable points in the disposition and character of Lord and Lady Tynedale, the affection she was sure they entertained for each other, the large fortune they possessed, with the enlarged means of doing good which it gave them, and she sighed to think that with so many blessings, they embittered their lives by a want of forbearance to the feelings of each other, and by both forming too high expectations of happiness. Experience had proved to Mrs. Delamere, that perfect happiness is not the lot of man, and she felt the truth of those exquisite lines of Sheridan's, —

"True happiness is not the growth of earth,
The toil is fruitless if you seek it there,
'Tis an exotic of celestial birth,
And never blooms but in celestial air.

Sweet flow'r of Paradise — thy seeds are sown
In, here and there, a mind of heavenly mould,
It rises slow, and buds — but ne'er was known
To blossom here. —The climate is too cold."

Shortly after her return from the Grove, Mrs. Delamere was obliged to leave England with her sister, whose health was in a declining state, and who was ordered to try the effect of the milder clime of the south of France. Prior to her departure, she addressed a long letter to Lady Tynedale, in which she pointed out the errors of her conduct, and forcibly impressed on her the necessity of forbearance; and begged her not to slight the good within her reach, because it came in a less pleasing shape than she would have chosen. She earnestly recommended Lady Tynedale to abandon the romantic notion, that the husband should continue the devoted lover,

and to consider, that though Lord Tynedale possessed many estimable qualities, he was not formed, either by nature or inclination, to act the hero of a novel. She told her, and she spoke from experience, that the first year of marriage is the trial, and *that* once over, reason she hoped would exert her influence. She reminded her, that the veil which had prevented her from discovering the imperfections of Lord Tynedale in his days of courtship, being now removed, all his faults were viewed as through a magnifying glass, and no allowance made for them, but that she felt confident time and reason would correct the errors of youthful romance and inexperience.

Mrs. Delamere was absent two years; during which time she occasionally heard from her friend; but as she had requested

that no matrimonial complaints might be alluded to in their correspondence, she could only give a guess, by the general air of cheerfulness that pervaded the letters, of the state of Lady Tynedale's feelings.

During the first six months of her absence, the letters from the Grove were brief and moody: they bore a less gloomy tinge the six following; and occasional references were made to Lord Tynedale, that convinced Mrs. Delamere a change for the better had taken place in the domestic happiness of the Grove. On Mrs. Delamere's arrival in London, she was glad to find Lord and Lady Tynedale settled in town for the season; and the visit they paid her the morning after her arrival afforded her an opportunity of witnessing the good understanding that subsisted between them. Lady Tynedale's sweet countenance was all

sunshine, and the warmth and cordiality that marked his Lordship's manner towards Mrs. Delamere convinced her that he was a happy man, and that he looked on her as a true friend, and one of the promoters of his felicity.

When Mrs. Delamere called in Grosvenor Square the next day, Lord Tynedale was from home; and Lady T., glad of the opportunity of unbosoming herself to her friend, embraced her again and again, and thanked her for the happiness her good advice had procured her. "When we parted, my dearest friend," she exclaimed, "you left me the most disconsolate and discontented of women. My vanity mortified at finding my husband did not quite adore me,—and nothing short of adoration would satisfy my self-love, —instead of endeavouring to render myself

more worthy of his affection, I immediately concluded that the fault was his, not mine; and I gave way to peevishness, ill-nature, and satirical observations, taking every means of showing him that I could be as cold and careless as I fancied he was. If he rode out to view any improvements that were going forward on his estate, I felt myself slighted; if I accompanied him, I was dissatisfied if he thought of any thing but me. His visits to his old acquaintances also offended me; and his taking up a book, or devoting himself to his pen for an hour in the evening, gave me the greatest mortification. If I touched my harp or piano-forte, I expected him to fly to me, to lean over me with all the ecstatic delight of a lover, and to breathe nothing but raptures. Each day, each hour, my vanity received fresh wounds; and at

each wound it became still more sensitive and insatiable. His commendations appeared to me cold and common-place when compared, as they constantly were, with the remembered inflated plaudits of former admirers. In short, when I found that he could amuse himself for hours independently of me, I determined that as I could not be every thing to him, I would be nothing. I put on an air of coldness that was far from my real feelings, but which effectually imposed on him. I avoided his society; and, when in it, did all in my power to make him feel that I thought it irksome. This conduct fatigued and disgusted him; and he began to consider me as a selfish, empty woman, who was completely dependant on society and admiration for happiness, and who, having no mental resources, could neither enjoy hap-

piness herself nor contribute to the felicity of her husband. In this state you found us, and in the same unhappy condition you left us. Your letters first opened my eyes to my own folly; but for a long time my vanity struggled against the conviction that *I* was to blame.

To dispel the weariness of my solitude I took to reading; and having a dislike to novels, I read only the best authors. By degrees I began to find that the hours glided so swiftly by, that I never felt the least portion of that tedium and ennui that had before oppressed me. My mind was so occupied by the studies I was engaged in that I ceased to remember my own grievances; and I could now excuse the ardour and constancy with which Lord T. devoted himself to reading. This produced a great

improvement in my temper; and when my husband, as he frequently did, enquired with an air of interest what work I was perusing, I answered him with a kindness and complacency that induced him to advert to the merits of the author, and I felt gratified by the good taste and discrimination which his observations displayed; and still more sô at discovering that his sentiments often accorded with my own. I had sought reading as an avocation that would render me completely independent of Lord T.'s society; but I now found that it formed a new and strong link to draw us together. Our books were frequently laid down in an evening to discuss the beauties of some passage that pleased us; and improving and rational conversation took the place of moody silence, or peevish remarks. I ceased to desire adulation, and

felt my self-respect increased by the attention which Lord T. evinced to my observations. By degrees confidence was established between us, and affection restored. Your letters of advice were now aided by my own feelings; and happiness, pure, rational, domestic happiness, became our portion. How often have I felt the justice and truth of your sentiments on marriage, which experience has proved to me were founded on knowledge of the world. Had I waited for a perfect acquaintance with Lord Tynedale's character and disposition, many hours of domestic discomfort would have been spared to me; but I bless God that those hours have been followed by days of happiness, that are cheaply purchased, even at such a price.

THE RING.



Walking up St. James's Street a few days ago, I was attracted by some very beautiful specimens of bijouterie, displayed for sale in the window of a shop; and seeing a very curious antique ring, set in diamonds, labelled for a sum that I fancied beneath its value, I was tempted to purchase it. Examining my bargain while sitting in my easy chair after dinner, I dropped asleep, as is my usual custom; and the ring being the last subject of my thoughts, gave rise to the following dream. I thought that, while in the act of contemplating my new purchase, it thus addressed

me—and, however unnatural and improbable it may seem, that an inanimate object should be gifted with the power of speech, yet, with the usual incoherence of a dream, all appeared to me perfectly correct.

"Do not undervalue me because this day I came into your possession for a comparatively trifling sum. Though you see me now with my lustre dimmed by age and want of care, time was that I wore a different aspect. In my fate you will see the lot of all sublunary grandeur, and I shall therefore relate to you my eventful history.

"I was purchased in Rome, where I was examined and admired by many a virtuoso; but a young Englishman, on his travels, no sooner saw me than he wished to possess me. Doubtful, however, of his own skill as a connoisseur, he determined on consulting a person considered a perfect judge in such matters; and,

with all the unsuspicious openness of his countrymen, told my owner so. No sooner had he left the house, than my master hastened to the virtuoso that the Englishman had named as the arbiter of my destiny; and having originally demanded double my value, he now offered a handsome douceur to the antiquary, if he could, by his commendations, ensure my sale to the young amateur. Those two precious Romans soon came to a perfect understanding; in a day or two the bargain was made, and I was consigned to the care of my new master. Though I disliked the cupidity of my late owner, and wished to leave him, still it was not without a pang that I bade adieu to the lovely cameos and intaglios that had been so long my neighbours in the same drawer; and the precious antique gems that had been so often in close contact with

me, never appeared to possess so many charms as in the moment that I was torn from them for ever. My vanity, however, consoled me for the separation; for it had been cruelly wounded by having overheard my crafty countryman say, that he had two Ioles, one on a beryl, and another on a sardonyx, both far superior to me, who am, as you perceive, an agate, and that he heartily wished me off his hands, as no one but an Englishman would buy me.

" My new master having looked at me with a carelessness that bespoke him as little interested as skilled in antiques, consigned me to his writing-box: where I lay side by side with many other articles of *virtu*, and surrounded by all the *gages d'amour* with which he had been favoured since he left college. Here I lay in inglorious obscurity for some time; for though my

prison was frequently opened, to draw from it a fresh supply of money, I remained unnoticed. At length, by finding my cage moved about, I guessed that a change in my destiny was taking place, and I soon discovered, by the rumbling motion and rude jolts which I experienced, that I was leaving my native city, the once proud and imperial capital of the world. I shall pass over the grief which this parting caused me; nor shall I dwell on the desagrémens that took place between my fellow-travellers and myself on the journey: our careless master had bestowed so little attention in packing us, that we frequently experienced some of the unpleasant rubs of life. The glass that covered a portrait fell a victim to one of the quarrels, and some beautiful Roman shells were shattered into fragments.

" We proceeded to Florence, and thence to Paris, where we took up our abode; and we had not been long there, when I observed that my prison was never opened that my master did not exhibit certain symptoms of chagrin and impatience which boded something disagreeable. One day he seized my cage with a violence that threatened its annihilation, and flattered me with the hope of liberty: but the lock soon obeyed his hand; and from the frequent exclamations I heard him utter, of " Cursed fool!" " Stupid dupe!" " Stingy father!" I guessed that something unusual had occurred, and I found he was writing to solicit from his father fresh supplies. His application failed of success, but brought him a recal. We soon bade adieu to Paris, and set out for England, — that country, of whose wealth I had heard so much, and

whose sons have been considered as the natural prey of the artful and designing.

"The first gleam of light that visited me in England shone through the dusty panes of a window in the Custom House at Dover; where my prison was unceremoniously opened, and my companions and myself exposed to the view of a crowd of spectators, amidst a heap of clothes-bags, dressing-cases, *portfeuilles*, portmanteaus, china, artificial flowers, &c. &c. &c. Never shall I forget the scene that presented itself to me. The looks of inexorable rigidity of the custom-house officers, — the pale faces of the owners of the various properties, which told a piteous tale of sufferings past, and from which they had not yet recovered. The soiled dresses, mis-shaped hats and bonnets, and uncurled ringlets falling over languid cheeks, — showed the ladies

in no very favourable point of view; while the unshorn chins, and rumpled neckcloths of the gentlemen, betrayed that they had not escaped the disasters of the briny element. Each individual stood close to his or her property; and all personal suffering appeared to be forgotten in the anxiety which they felt to recover their possessions from the ruthless fangs of the custom-house officers. One lady was declaring that a piece of fine Mecklin lace, found in her band-box, was English manufacture; and another was insisting that a piece of French silk, which was discovered peeping through her pocket-hole, was merely the lining of her dress. Innumerable female voices, all speaking together, were heard around, making confusion doubly confused; while the gentlemen, who appeared less able to argue with the revenue officers, contented

themselves with undervaluing their properties, that the duties might be proportionally reduced. I made one reflection on the scene around me, which was, that the female sex are all addicted to dealing in contraband goods, or smuggling, as it was there called; for out of above fifty ladies present, there was not one who did not endeavour to defraud the revenue.

"After witnessing several animated contests, and countless seizures, it at length came to my turn to be examined; and I felt my dignity not a little offended by being taken up between the soiled finger and thumb of one of the inspectors, who, after viewing me for a moment, pronounced me English, which my master having with rather a disdainful smile tacitly admitted, I was restored to my old abode, and, with my companions, again huddled up in our narrow cell.

" The scene I had witnessed conveyed no favourable impression of England; and I could not help ejaculating to myself, Is this, then, that famed land of freedom of which I have so often heard; and whose laws, and protection of private property, are so frequently held up to admiration? How prone are mankind to misrepresent, and exaggerate; and how ill-governed must this same England be, and how defective its laws, when the goods for which an individual has paid his money, and which, of course, have become his property, are taken from him without even the civility of an excuse, and this by the very officers employed to carry their boasted laws into effect! I made many more wise reflections on laws and governments, but of which, as they do not concern my history, I shall spare

you the recital; let it suffice to say, that no where had I heard law and justice so violently denounced as in an English custom-house: and there it was I first learned that they are not synonymous terms.

"The motion of the vehicle, as we rolled along from Dover towards London, was so different from that to which I had hitherto been accustomed, that I concluded the roads in England to be much better, or that some peculiar excellence appertained to English horses or postillions. My travelling-companions and I agreed much better; and during our journey from Dover to the metropolis, we maintained our equilibrium with perfect decorum, and had not a single rupture.

"We arrived in the British capital on a fine evening in May; and I was the next morning

released from the narrow precincts of my prison, and consigned, with some other articles of *virtu*, to the fair sister of my master. She admired me extremely; but returned me to her brother, with the observation, that he had better reserve me for the finger of a fair female friend of hers, to whom he was to be presented at dinner; but to all his enquiries as to the name of this fair unknown, she declined giving any information.

"I was placed on the dressing-table of my master, and could not help observing, that, when attiring himself for dinner this day, he bestowed more than his accustomed care in arranging his neckcloth, and giving his hair that careless waving flow so much admired by travelled beaus. I had hitherto fancied that the male sex were superior to the minor considerations of personal de-

corations; but I now discovered that no blooming nymph of seventeen, at her first presentation, could have taken more pains in displaying her charms to the best advantage, than did my master on the present occasion. I felt considerable interest to know the result of his interview with the fair unknown, but had no means of gratifying my curiosity. I remarked, however, that from this eventful day, he appeared more than usually anxious to adorn his person to the best advantage; and, at the end of a few weeks, I observed him draw a small turquoise ring from his finger, which he kissed with a rapture that excited my astonishment, mingled with indignation, that an ornament so inferior to myself could be so valued, while I was left whole weeks unnoticed on his dressing-table, or only casually touched by the housemaid

when arranging the room. At length I was one day taken up, and conveyed by my master to a celebrated jeweller, to whose care he consigned me, with particular injunctions to have me reset, encircled with diamonds, and made to the size of a very small gold ring which he left as a pattern. He gave innumerable directions, expressive of his anxiety to have me completed; all of which convinced me that I was designed for the finger of some fair lady, and the unknown immediately occurred to my memory. The jeweller, whose only object was to incur as much expense to his employer as possible, encircled me with a row of brilliants, so large as nearly to hide my diminished head; and having now all the appearance of a modern antique, I was restored to my master, and the next day was placed by

him on one of the most snowy, taper fingers, in the world, as a guard to a plain gold ring that he had put on the same finger at St. George's church half an hour before, as I discovered by the conversation that followed the action.

"My mistress seemed excessively pleased with me, and frequently raised her hand to arrange her hair or dress, and as frequently expressed her admiration of me, which not a little excited my vanity; but my self-complacency was much abated by discovering that she admired the diamonds that surrounded me more than myself, and my respect for her was much decreased by ascertaining, from her observations, that she was totally unskilled in antiques.

"For about a year I retained the post of honour with my new mistress; but towards

the close of that period, I discovered a visible alteration in her: of which, as it affected her treatment of me, I took particular notice. The first symptom I observed was a want of cordiality between her and my *ci devant* master. Occasional differences took place between them, conducted on both sides with much warmth; and I noticed that a male visitor, who was very assiduous in his attention, seemed to have taken a great fancy either to my mistress's hand or myself, for he frequently pressed both between his, and as frequently raised them to his lips, though gently reprimanded for it by the lady. At length, one day he removed me from the fair finger I had so long encircled; and then drawing off the plain gold ring that I had so faithfully guarded, replaced it by one of nearly a similar kind, and then

restored me to my former station, having consigned my old companion to his pocket.

I felt, or fancied that I felt, my mistress's hand agitated by a tremulous emotion, and a drop that, save from its warmth I should have taken for crystal, at that moment fell on me, and was hastily brushed away by the lips of the gentleman. I felt indignant at being robbed of this liquid pearl, which to my prophetic soul appeared like the last memorial of departing purity, nor could I be reconciled to the new companion who had usurped the place of my old one, to which, habit, and its unobtrusive qualities, had endeared me. The next day my mistress took advantage of the absence of her husband to elope with her lover, and though pressed by him to remove me for a ring of great beauty and value that he had provided as a sub-

stitute, she expressed such a desire still to retain me, that, though with a visible degree of chagrin, he consented to permit me to occupy my old station, and placed his gift on a finger of the right hand.

I soon observed many symptoms of unhappiness in my mistress; I was frequently bedewed with the tears that trickled down her pale cheek, as the hand to which I belonged supported it; and the same hand was often pressed to her burning forehead, as if to still the throbbing pulse that agonized her there. By degrees the once snowy hand lost its fairness, and assumed a sickly yellow hue; the once finely rounded taper finger which I had so closely encircled, shrunk from my embrace. Yet still my unhappy mistress seemed to wish to retain me, and by twisting several silken threads round me, she again secured me;

but, alas! in a few days I felt an unusual coldness steal over the attenuated finger, which was succeeded by a rigidity that gave it the feel and semblance of marble."
* * * * * At this moment my servant, entering the room, awoke me, and interrupted a dream, the impression of which was so vivid, as to leave the traces of tears on my cheek.

JOURNAL OF A WEEK,

OF A

LADY OF FASHION.

Monday. — Awoke with a head-ach, the certain effect of being bored all the evening before, by the never-dying strain at the Countess of Leyden's. Nothing ever was half so tiresome as musical parties: no one gives them except those who can exhibit themselves, and fancy they excel. If you speak, during the performance of one of their endless pieces, they look cross and affronted: except that all the world of fashion are there,

I never would go to another; for, positively, it is ten times more fatiguing than staying at home. To be compelled to look charmed, and to applaud when you are half dead from suppressing yawns, and to see half-a-dozen very tolerable men, with whom one could have had a very pleasant chat, except for the stupid music, is really too bad. Let me see, what have I done this day? oh! I remember every thing went wrong, as it always does when I have a head-ach. Flounce, more than usually stupid, tortured my hair, and I flushed my face by scolding her. I wish people could scold without getting red, for it disfigures one for the whole day; and the consciousness of this always makes me more angry, as I think it doubly provoking in Flounce to discompose me, when she must know it spoils my looks.

Dressing from twelve to three. Madame Tornure sent me a most unbecoming cap: mem. I shall leave her off when I have paid her bill.—Heigh-ho,—when will that be?—Tormented by duns, jewellers, mercers, milliners:—I think they always fix on Mondays for dunning: I suppose it is because they know one is sure to be horribly vapoured after a Sunday evening's party, and they like to increase one's miseries.

Just as I was stepping into my carriage, fancying that I had got over the desagrémens of the day, a letter arrives to say that my mother is very ill, and wants to see me: drove to Grosvenor Square in no very good humour for nursing, and, as I expected, found that Madame Ma Mère fancies herself much worse than she really is. Advised her to have dear Dr. Emulsion, who always tells people they

are not in danger, and who never disturbs his patient's mind with the idea of death until the moment of its arrival: found my sister supporting mamma's head on her bosom, and heard that she had sat up all night with her: by-the-bye, she did not look half so fatigued and ennuied as I did. They seemed both a little surprised at my leaving them so soon; but really there is no standing a sick room in May. My sister begged of me to come soon again, and cast a look of alarm (meant only for my eye) at my mother: I really think she helps to make her hyppish, for she is always fancying her in danger. Made two or three calls: drove in the Park: saw Belmont, who looked as if he expected to see me, and who asked if I was to be at the Duchess of Winterton's to-night. I promised to go—he seemed delighted. What would Lady Allendale say,

if she saw the pleasure which the assurance of my going gave him? I long to let her see my triumph. Dined *tête-à-tête* — my lord very sulky — abused my friend Lady Winstanley, purposely to pique me, — he wished me not to go out; said it was shameful, and mamma so ill; just as if my staying at home would make her any better. Found a letter from Madame, the governess, saying that the children want frocks and stockings: — they are always wanting: — I do really believe they wear out their things purposely to plague me. Dressed for the Dutchess of Winterton's: wore my new Parisian robe of blonde lace, trimmed in the most divine way, with lilies of the valley. Flounce said I looked myself, and I believe there was some truth in it; for the little discussion with my Caro had given an animation and lustre to

my eyes. I gave Flounce my puce-coloured satin pelisse as a peace-offering for the morning scold.—The party literally full almost to suffocation. Belmont was hovering near the door of the anti-room, as if waiting my approach: he said, I never looked so resplendent:—Lady Allendale appeared ready to die with envy—very few handsome women in the room—and still fewer well dressed. Looked in at Lady Calderwood's, and Mrs. Burnet's. Belmont followed me to each. Came home at half past three o'clock, tired to death, and had my lovely dress torn past all chance of repair, by coming in contact with the button of one of the footmen in Mrs. B.'s hall. This is very provoking, for I dare say Madame Tornure will charge abominably high for it.

Tuesday. — Awoke in good spirits, having had delightful dreams:—sent to know how

mamma felt, and heard she had a bad night: —must call there, if I can:—wrote Madame a lecture, for letting the children wear out their clothes so fast: Flounce says, they wear out twice as many things as Lady Woodland's children. Read a few pages of Amelia Mansfield: very affecting: put it by for fear of making my eyes red. Lady Mortimer came to see me, and told me a great deal of scandal chit-chat: she is very amusing.—I did not get out until past five: too late then to go and see mamma. Drove in the Park, and saw Lady Litchfield walking: got out and joined her: the people stared a good deal. Belmont left his horse and came to us: he admired my walking dress very much.—Dined alone, and so escaped a lecture:—had not nerves sufficient to see the children:—they make such a noise, and spoil one's

clothes. Went to the Opera: wore my tissue turban, which has a good effect. Belmont came to my box, and sat every other visitor out. My lord came in, and looked, as usual, sulky. Wanted me to go away without waiting for the dear delightful squeeze of the round room. My lord scolded the whole way home, and said I should have been by the sick bed of my mother instead of being at the Opera. I hummed a tune, which I find is the best mode of silencing him, and he muttered something about my being unfeeling and incorrigible.

Wednesday. — Did not rise till past one o'clock, and from three to five was occupied in trying on dresses and examining new trimmings. Determined on not calling to see mamma this day, because if I found her much worse, I might be prevented from

going to Almack's, which I have set my heart on: — drove out shopping, and bought some lovely things: —met Belmont, who gave me a note which he begged me to read at my leisure: — had half a mind to refuse taking it, but felt confused, and he went away before I recovered my self-possession: — almost determined on returning it without breaking the seal, and put it into my reticule with this intention; but somehow or other my curiosity prevailed, and I opened it.—Found it filled with hearts, and darts, and declarations: —felt very angry at first; for really it is very provoking that one can't have a comfortable little flirtation half-a-dozen times with a man, but that he fancies he may declare his passion, and so bring on a *dénouement;* for one must either cut the creature, which, if he is amusing, is disagreeable, or else he

thinks himself privileged to repeat his love on every occasion. How very silly men are in acting thus; for if they continued their assiduities without a positive declaration, one might affect to misunderstand their attentions, however marked; but those decided declarations leave nothing to the imagination; and offended modesty, with all the guards of female propriety, are indispensably up in arms. I remember reading in some book that "A man has seldom an offer of kindness to make to a woman that she has not a presentiment of it some moments before;" and I think it was in the same book that I read that a continuation of quiet attentions, leaving their meaning to the imagination, is the best mode of gaining a female heart. My own experience has proved the truth of this.—I wish Belmont had not written to me:—I don't know

what to do:—how shocked my mother and sister would be if they knew it:—I have promised to dance with him at Almack's too:—how disagreeable. I shall take the note and return it to him, and desire that he will not address me again in that style. I have read the note again, and I really believe he loves me very much:—poor fellow, I pity him:—how vexed Lady Winstanley would be if she knew it:—I must not be very angry with him: I'll look grave and dignified, and so awe him, but not be too severe. I have looked over the billet again, and don't find it so presumptuous as I first thought it:—after all, there is nothing to be angry about, for fifty women of rank have had the same sort of thing happen to them without any mischief following it. Belmont says I am a great prude, and I believe I am; for I fre-

quently find myself recurring to the sage maxims of mamma and my sister, and asking myself what would they think of so and so. Lady Winstanley laughs at them, and calls them a couple of precise quizzes; but still I have remarked how much more lenient they are to a fault than she is. Heigh-ho, I am afraid they have been too lenient to mine:—but I must banish melancholy reflections, and dress for Almack's. Flounce told me, on finishing my toilette, that I was armed for conquest; and that I never looked so beautiful. Mamma would not much approve of Flounce's familiar mode of expressing her admiration; but, poor soul, she only says what she thinks.—I have observed that my lord dislikes Flounce very much; but so he does every one that I like.

Never was there such a delightful ball: — though I am fatigued beyond measure, I must note down this night's adventures: — I found the rooms quite filled, and narrowly escaped being locked out by the inexorable regulations of the Lady Patronesses, for it only wanted a quarter to twelve when I entered. By-the-bye, I have often wondered why people submit to the haughty sway of those ladies; but I suppose it is that most persons dislike trouble, and so prefer yielding to their imperious dictates, to incurring a displeasure, which would be too warmly and too loudly expressed, not to alarm the generality of quiet people. There is a quackery in fashion, as in all other things, and any one who has courage enough (I was going to write impudence), rank enough, and wealth enough,

may be a leader. But here am I moralizing on the requisites of a leader of fashion, when I should be noting down the delicious scene of this night in her favourite and favoured temple. I tried to look very grave at poor Belmont; but the lights, the music, and the gaiety of the scene around me, with the consciousness of my looking more than usually well, gave such an exhilaration to my spirits, that I could not contract my brows into any thing like a frown; and without a frown, or something approaching it, it is impossible to look grave. Belmont took advantage of my good spirits to claim my hand, and pressed it very much. I determined to postpone my lecture to him until the next good opportunity, for a ball-room is the worst place in the world to act the moral or sentimental.—*A-propos* of Belmont,

what have I done with his note?—My God, what a scrape have I got into!—I left my reticule, into which I had put the note, on my sofa, and the note bears the evident marks of having been opened by some one who could not fold it again: it must have been Flounce.—I have often observed her curiosity—and now am I completely in her power.—What shall I do?—After serious consideration, I think it the wisest plan to appear not to suspect her, and part with her the first good opportunity. I feel all over in a tremor, and can write no more.

Thursday.—Could not close my eyes for three hours after I got to bed; and when I did, dreamt of nothing but detections, duels, and exposures:—awoke terrified:—I feel nervous and wretched:—Flounce looks more than usually important and familiar—

or is it conscience that alarms me? — Would to Heaven I had never received that horrid note — or that I had recollected to take it to Almack's, and give it back to him. I really feel quite ill. Madame requested an audience, and has told me she can no longer remain in my family, as she finds it impossible to do my children justice unassisted by me. I tried to persuade her to stay another quarter, but she firmly, but civilly, declined. This is very provoking, for the children are fond of, and obedient to Madame, and I have had no trouble since she has been with them; besides my mother recommended her, and will be annoyed at her going. I must write to Madame, and offer to double her salary; all governesses, at least all that I have tried, like money. I must lie down, I feel so fatigued and languid: — mamma is worse,

and I really am unable to go to her; for I am so nervous that I could be of no use.

Friday.—I am summoned to my mother, and my Lord says she is in the utmost danger. Madame, to add to my discomforts, has declined my offers:—I feel a strong presentiment of evil, and dread I know not what * * * *.

Good Heavens! what a scene have I witnessed—my dear and excellent mother was insensible when I got to her, and died without seeing or blessing me. Oh! what would I not give to recal the past, or to bring back even the last fleeting week, that I might atone, in some degree, for my folly, my worse than folly—my selfish and cruel neglect of the best of mothers! Never shall I cease to abhor myself for it.—Never till I saw that sainted form for ever insen-

sible did I feel my guilt. From day to day I have deceived myself with the idea that her illness was not dangerous, and silenced all the whispers of affection and duty, to pursue my selfish and heartless pleasures. How different are the resignation and fortitude of my sister, from my frantic grief! — she has nothing to accuse herself of, and knows that her care and attention soothed the bed of death. But how differently was I employed! — distraction is in the thought; I can write no more, for my tears efface the words.

Saturday. My dear and estimable sister has been with me, and has spoken comfort to my afflicted soul. She conveyed to me a letter from my sainted parent, written a few hours before her death, which possibly this exertion accelerated. The veil which has so long shrouded my reason is for ever re-

moved, and all my selfishness and misconduct are laid bare to my view. Oh! my mother—you whose pure counsel and bright example in life could not preserve your unworthy child, from the bed of death your last effort has been to save her. As a daughter, a wife, and a mother, how have I blighted your hopes and wounded your affections!

My sister says, that my mother blessed me with her last words, and expressed her hopes that her dying advice would snatch me from the paths of error. Those dying hopes, and that last blessing shall be my preservatives. I will from this hour devote myself to the performance of those duties that I have so shamefully, so cruelly neglected. My husband, my children, — with you I will retire from those scenes of dissipation and folly, so fatal to my repose and virtue; and in retire-

ment commune with my own heart, correct its faults, and endeavour to emulate the excellencies of my lamented mother.

Oh ! may my future conduct atone for the past, but never, never let the remembrance of my errors be effaced from my mind.

AN ALLEGORY.

Pleasure was the daughter of Virtue and Happiness, and the sister of Innocence and Modesty; these three lovely sisters, like the Graces, were seldom asunder, and their parents were delighted with their union and harmony; but, alas! on a luckless day, while roaming o'er a verdant mead, Pleasure, tired with plucking every flowret that pleased her, was attracted by the brilliant hues of a beautiful butterfly that floated in air like a winged flower, and proposed to her sisters to chace it. Innocence was occupied in admiring the

effect of the dew-drops, which, glittering beneath the beams of the rising sun, shone like orient gems on the tender petals of the flowers, and Modesty was contemplating her own sweet emblem, the snowy lily of the valley, whose spotless purity vied with the veil that shaded her lovely bosom. They advised Pleasure to pause and enjoy the smiling scene around her, and not to abandon it for a pursuit that might end in disappointment, and incur the anger of their parents. Pleasure, heedless and self-willed, regarded not the advice, but sprung forward in the pursuit, and was soon out of sight. With eager eyes, out-stretched arms, and rapid steps, she chaced the gaudy insect from blossom to blossom, until it lighted, nearly exhausted, on a passion-flower; when Pleasure, springing forward to seize it, crushed both the in-

sect and flower in her ruthless grasp. Disappointed of the anticipated gratification, she flung the mutilated fragments from her hand, and her beautiful countenance was for a moment clouded by anger; but another gaudy butterfly hovering near, attracted her attention, and she was about to renew the chace, when Virtue appeared before her, with a severity of aspect that she had never before seen him wear. Awed by his grave looks, Pleasure at first hung her head, and then assuming one of her most winning smiles, she attempted to approach him; but Virtue retreating from her touch, thus addressed her:—"While pursuing your own amusement, I forbade your giving pain to any thing that had life, or destroying the bounteous gifts of nature, scattered to adorn the paths of duty. You have deprived an

insect of existence, in the moment that, after a life of usefulness, it was enjoying the fruits of past industry, by basking in the rays of the sun, and inhaling the fragrance of each tempting bud; and the flowers that have been crushed beneath your heedless feet, and scattered by your lavish hands, might still have retained their beauty and perfume to gratify others. When Pleasure ceases to respect the commands of Virtue, she is no longer worthy to be considered the offspring of Happiness, or the companion of Innocence and Modesty. Henceforth you are banished from our presence, and condemned to wander through the mazes of error, and you will be valued only by the least estimable of mankind. The haunts of Dissipation, Idleness, and Folly, are the temples in which you will be worshipped; and your votaries, in

pursuing you, will cease to regard the approval of Virtue, the rewards of Happiness, and the smiles of Innocence and Modesty."

Having thus said, Pleasure was instantly transported far from the presence of her parents and sisters, and found herself irresistibly impelled forward, without the power of suspending her course, for more than a few minutes. She first paused in a splendid saloon, brilliantly illuminated, and decorated in a style of great magnificence. It was crowded with gay visitors, who seemed intent only on receiving Pleasure, who felt flattered by their homage, and was approaching to reward them with her sweetest smiles, when she was impelled from them, and found herself hurried away. She turned to regard their movements, and found that Disappointment, Envy, and Detraction now occupied her

place, and attracted all their attention. Disgusted with their conduct, and mortified by their fickleness, Pleasure vowed never more to attend a route, the dullest of all amusements, and flew off to a ball, where Youth and Beauty hailed her presence with sparkling eyes and sweetest smiles. "Here," exclaimed Pleasure, "I hope I may remain and enjoy myself; but even should I be compelled to fly from this scene of gaiety, I shall not have the mortification of having my place occupied by unworthy successors, for those amiable mortals seem too much devoted to me not to retain a lively remembrance of me, though deprived of my presence." But, alas! while making this reflection, she was again hurried away, and saw with regret that Ennui was struggling with Vanity, which should usurp the place of Pleasure. She

hurried from opera to concert, and from theatre to masquerade ; but after showing herself for a few minutes, found herself banished from each, for her empire was attacked by all the evil passions, headed by Ennui, leagued against her; and her votaries, though professing to worship her alone, had too long submitted to the control of the Passions to resist their baleful influence, even to enjoy the smiles of the goddess of their idolatry. It was now, for the first time, that Pleasure became sensible of the miserable change in her destiny; and regretted, with fond, but bitter remembrance, her separation from Virtue, Happiness, Innocence, and Modesty. Filled with contrition, she implored the forgiveness of her offended parents, and begged to be once more restored to their presence. Innocence and Modesty pleaded

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for her, and Virtue, won by their entreaties, consented to remove her from earth, where she no more appears; but, linked between her sisters, and attending to the dictates of Virtue, she is again united to Happiness, from whose presence she never wanders.

Her place on earth is supplied by a nymph who assumes her name and attributes, but who is of earthly birth, being the offspring of Extravagance and Idleness, and who leads her votaries from folly to ruin.

FASTIDIOUSNESS OF TASTE.

After being accustomed to excellence in art and science, it requires great merit to stimulate the languid attention, and satisfy the increasing fastidiousness of taste. This is a cruel deduction from the pleasure which is expected to be derived from familiarity with excellence and improvement in knowledge; so that after all it may be doubted, whether we grow happier as we grow wiser; and perhaps those who are at the most pains, — to see the best that is to be seen, — to read the best that is to be read, — and to hear the best that is to be heard, are only labouring

to exhaust the sources of innocent gratification, and incapacitating themselves from future enjoyment, by approaching nearer to that state which has been so truly described as a state of

> "Painful pre-eminence ourselves to view,
> Above life's pleasures, and its comforts too."
>
> *Diary of an Invalid.*

I believe it may be doubted, whether too great an improvement or refinement of the mental powers does not produce a fastidiousness injurious to happiness. When we are accustomed to view fine pictures and statues, we cannot behold inferior ones with pleasure; and as the latter are more frequently brought before us, we lose the gratification which we might derive from them if our tastes were less refined. The frequent perusal of the best authors is apt to unfit us for society; for it is

difficult to find companions whose conversation can make amends for the books which we have quitted. A mind thus refined is like the fabled bird of the East, that stores her nest with sweets with which she consumes herself.

COQUETRY.



IN No. 198. of the Spectator there is a remarkably good paper by Addison, on the dangers of coquetry and levity. He commences by saying, "There is a species of women whom I shall distinguish by the name of Salamanders. Now, a Salamander is a kind of heroine in chastity, that treads upon fire, and lives in the midst of flames without being hurt. A Salamander knows no distinction of sex in those she converses with, grows familiar with a stranger at first sight, and is not so narrow-spirited as to observe whether the person she talks to be in

male or female attire. She plays a whole evening at picquet with a gentleman, walks with him two or three hours by moonlight, and is extremely scandalized at the unreasonableness of a husband, or the severity of a parent, that would debar the sex from such innocent liberties."

There is no character more prevalent in the present day than that of the Salamander, though it is perhaps now better known as the the coquette, and none more injurious to society. It may be questioned whether the woman who, in private, sacrifices her honour, but in public wears the semblance of virtue, is not less dangerous to society; and whether there be not greater hope of her amendment. Her sin, enormous as it is, being concealed from the world, and accompanied by all the outward appearances of propriety, has not

the same pernicious effect of bad example. Conscious of her own crimes, she pays the deference to Virtue of assuming its mask; and it is to be hoped that she may see the error of her ways and amend: but the Salamander goes on priding herself on the consciousness of preserving her chastity; while her conduct is so full of levity, that the generality of mankind believe that so much public impropriety must be accompanied by actual guilt; and her example cannot fail of being injurious to the young and thoughtless. There is but little prospect of her amendment; for though suffering under a loss of character, she is unconscious of her faults, and fancies herself the victim of unjust slander. She is insensible of the necessity of appearing virtuous, as well as of being so; and this blindness to her own errors engenders an angry feeling at

what she considers the injustice of the world, which leaves the mind ill prepared for reflection and repentance. Another danger attached to the Salamander is, that by her levity she encourages freedoms which often so far exceed the bounds of propriety, that even she feels indignant; and, instead of reflecting on her own want of conduct, which led to such liberties, and resolving never again to betray the same levity, she resents the insult with all the warmth and astonishment of outraged modesty and decorum; like a person who has thrown down the fence which guards his property, and is then surprised that people trespass on it.

EGOTISM.

THERE are few characters more offensive to society than that of the egotist, and none for which we find less excuse; and yet this very failing may in some instances proceed from a goodness of heart, and from a want of knowledge of mankind, which lead the undiscern ing into a belief that all their actions are as interesting to others as to themselves. An acquaintance with general society ought to cure this propensity; for an accurate observer will soon discover, that with the exception of his own family, there are few individuals to whom his actions are not uninteresting, and

to whom the recapitulation of them is not tedious and disgusting.

I met with an amusing didactic poem, entitled "Conversation," written by William Cook, Esq., which contains some good advice on this subject, and which I shall subjoin: but good as the advice is, I fear it will be of little use, for egotists are seldom aware of their own defects; and even the disagreeable hints of averted looks, and gaping yawns of the listeners, do not always bring conviction that the subject is tiresome.

" The several letters which grammarians spread,
Alike before the grave or thoughtless head,
In conversation you may freely choose,
As suit the range of philosophic views;
Save one — which well-bred modesty puts by
On most occasions, — called the mighty I.
Let not this braggart vaunt what I have done,
The long illustrious line from whence I sprung;

The jokes I told, the fortune I possess,
The skill I boast in science and address,
The plans I schemed at college, or at school,
With all my wondrous powers to play the fool.
Nor shift your course, and cant in humble tone,
O'er all the faults peculiarly *your* own;
As how too blunt, *your* manners will prevail,
Or how deceived by some concerted tale,
Madly good natured, though *your* friends betray,
But 'tis your failing, and you must obey.
Ah, would the Egotist but fairly state,
How he participates another's fate,
How much he heeds another's joys and cares
When not commingling with his own affairs,—
From kindred feelings, he'd confess with shame,
The unavailing boasts of selfish fame!"

The same poem contains some good observations, on a love of argument in conversation, and a desire of shining, as also of vaunting.

It is difficult to decide whether the egotist or the arguer be the more disagreeable to society. The first thinks only of himself;

the second is generally not content with thinking highly of his own powers, but seems anxious to display them at the expense of those with whom he happens to engage in conversation, and not only often displays as much selfishness as the egotist, but the selfishness is of a more offensive kind, as it is generally mixed with ill-humour: it being allowed that those who are fond of argument seldom carry it on either with good humour or with good breeding.

The very act of engaging in a discussion displays a consciousness of superiority that can seldom fail to wound the self-love of some one of the company; and few, if any, are ever induced to change their opinions by the force of argument.

> "He that's convinced against his will
> Is of the same opinion still."

The same reasons, modestly adduced, without any of the heat or superciliousness so generally assumed by arguers, and above all, without any apparent desire to make converts or display one's own abilities, would have much greater weight in convincing people of their errors, if convincing them were the object in view; but it is to be feared that the desire of display, or the pleasure taken by a peevish temper, in contradiction, is too generally the cause of arguments. Whatever may be the cause, the effect is destructive to the harmony of society.

"Again, when argument, disposed to play,
Turns with commanding grace from grave to gay,
Its sprightly humour fanciful yet true,
Arrays the subject in its happiest hue.
But sprung from pride, and nursed by learning's spleen,
Aspiring only to be heard and seen,

When, as the bully of the mind, 'tis found
Thund'ring its dogmas with imperious sound,
We turn aside, with indignation stung,
And loathe this rude monopoly of tongue.
All met to please — consign this wordy war
To wrangling sophs, or witlings at the bar, —
All met for mutual happiness and ease,
'Tis fitting each should have his turn to please:
This cast of parts unites colloquial charms,
Gives wit its point, and wisdom all its arms.

" In reasoning, likewise, shun the vaunting line,
And sometimes wave the privilege to shine;
Why press a yielding foe, and let him see
How you excel him, and in what degree?
Praise when you can with genuine warmth of heart,
And even when forced to censure spare the smart.
Nay, should some rustic of the forest birth,
Who proves his near affinity to earth,
Should he come forward with his clumsy skill,
His talent force, his reasoning headstrong will, —
By silence ward the blow — or help to find
A quagmire bottom for his floundering mind;
Fast in his native mud, — his brawl's soon o'er,
And wisdom gains a respite from his roar."

REFLECTIONS.

"The coward calls himself a wary man, and the miser says he is frugal." BACON.

It is thus that we all endeavour to gloss over our own failings; but we seldom succeed in deceiving others, and never ourselves. No! however plausibly we may give to our vices the names of the prudent qualities from which they have degenerated, a latent feeling exists in our own hearts, that tells us how wide is the distinction between frugality and avarice, prudence and cowardice, caution and suspicion.

SUCCESS NOT ALWAYS A TEST OF MERIT.

Success is the criterion by which actions are too generally judged, and often constitutes the difference between a rash effort and a glorious enterprize.

INGRATITUDE.

Ingratitude is the most baleful weed that can spring up in the human heart; its growth destroys every plant of virtue, and bears down every blossom of affection. So noxious is its influence, that it taints every seed of goodness with which it comes in contact, and for ever injures the soil where it takes root.

Ingratitude! thy poisoned sting I feel
With inward bitterness I can't reveal;
Such deadly venom doth thy touch impart,
It falls like mildew, withering up the heart.

PAST HAPPINESS.

The memory of past happiness is like the essence of the rose, which, though robbed of its brilliant hue and graceful form, still retains its original sweetness.

SENSIBILITY.

THIS virtue, which, when kept within due bounds, contributes so much to the happiness of mankind, is, if permitted to degenerate into excess, productive of much evil.

Hume, in speaking of Rousseau to Blair, remarks, that his excessive sensibility is a source of perpetual pain to him; and compares him to "a man stript, not only of his clothes, but of his skin, and turned out in that situation, to combat with the rude and boisterous elements, such as perpetually disturb this lower world."

This sensitive being was fully aware of the pernicious tendency of an excess, or a misapplication of that quality by which he was so remarkably distinguished; for Rousseau, I think it is, who observes, that "The tears which we shed for fictitious sorrow are admirably adapted to make us proud of all the virtues we do not possess." The following lines are a true picture of that false sensibility which we too often see practised:

> "Awake to each fictitious feeling grown,
> And moved by ills to real life unknown;
> The mind with scenes of fabled woe possessed
> Will shut to homely grief the senseless breast,
> And turn from want and pain the offended ear,
> To pour for feigned distress the barren tear."

In guarding against the morbid, sickly sensibility into which this amiable feeling may degenerate, let us be careful that in plucking

out the weeds, we do not injure the root of this virtue.—Let us cherish it as a precious plant, that only requires to be trained and pruned to reach perfection.

FRIENDSHIP.

"I CALL the man my friend who is inclined to treat me, when present, with candour; when absent, with consideration." This was Marmontel's idea of the requisites essential in a friend; but how few, how very few, deserve that appellation, which is so indiscriminately bestowed by the unthinking on any companion whom chance or circumstances have thrown in their way, or with whom, by some similarity of pursuit or of taste, they have formed an intimacy; which, though it brings them often together, still leaves them devoid of any sentiment of real regard or esteem!

Friendship, in the modern acceptation of the word, is merely an association produced by habit or convenience, and dissolved as easily as it is formed. Happy, thrice happy, are they who in this "weary pilgrimage" meet with that most inestimable of all blessings — a true friend; feelingly alive to their good qualities, and correcting the bad with the mild and patient voice of truth, kindness, and sincerity, which only wishes to raise the object of its censure.

Rosseau has said, and with great delicacy of feeling, that we may repulse blows aimed at us by our enemies; but when we behold among the assassins our friend, sword in hand, nothing remains but to hide our head. How strongly did the "Et tu Brute" of Julius Cæsar express this sentiment, when, folding his robe over his head, he resigned

himself to his fate! It is from friends, or at least nominal ones, that we frequently receive the deepest wounds; and bitter experience daily inculcates the sage advice, from which the generous youthful mind turns with disdain, — "Live with your friends as though they may one day become your enemies."

WENTWORTH.

Oh, man! without fair woman's smile,
Vain were thy efforts to beguile
The weary hours that oft intrude
In life's gay scenes or solitude.

THE DECISION.

"I MUST have change of scene," I exclaimed, as lounging in my easy chair by the fire-side in my library, I indulged in the luxurious indolence of a hearty yawn and stretch of limbs, that solitude alone could excuse; and closing the second ponderous volume of Walpole's Memoirs, I gave way to drowsy ruminations.

I have now been eight months in the

country; and though they have flown swiftly and agreeably by, still the last few days have passed rather heavily, and it is time to forsake the joys of sylvan groves and rural shades for London and its dear delights (dear in more senses than one); and yet my home is endeared to me by so many recollections and associations, that I can hardly bring myself to leave it, even for a short time. The venerable trees that ornament my park appear like old friends; and I never pass the oak in front of the dining-room, beneath whose umbrageous shades I have so often frolicked in childhood's happy days, without recalling some faint shadow of the fleeting joys which I then experienced. Every spot in this favourite abode of my ancestors is rendered sacred by tender reminiscences; and when I look on the benevolent counte-

nances of my father and mother, that, even from the canvass, appear to beam on me with their wonted affection, I fancy the pleasure they would feel at seeing me residing here, and carrying on all the plans of improvement which they suggested. How many hours of unmixed and rational amusement have I enjoyed in this room! The volumes that surround me are all like tried and valued friends, who have administered to my happiness. The pictures, and even the furniture, possess an interest for me; and I cannot fancy myself so comfortable any where as in the easy chair in which I am now seated: but perhaps this latter feeling partakes a little of the united force of bachelorship and habit, and before it becomes fixed I ought to mingle more with general society. It is not good for man to be alone; and, even in Paradise,

Adam was unblest until Eve was given to him. Unlike our first parent, I must leave my Paradise, to search for a partner in that vast wilderness, the world; too happy if I can transport hither some fair companion, whose virtues may emulate those of its late mistress, and whose smiles and converse may soothe my future life. At thirty it is time to marry; and I must shake off the rust and indolence of selfish indulgence that, in solitude, so soon acquire the force of habit. London is the grand theatre of England: my fortune and connexions are a passport to the best exhibitions it can furnish; and there I may meet what no foreign clime has discovered to me, — the woman I would select as a partner for life. *Allons* then to London; and, for a few months, adieu to home and all its delights, to vernal gales and smiling landscapes,

to evenings of tranquil enjoyment and nights of healthful and unbroken slumber,—which are ill exchanged for a dense atmosphere, crowded streets, days of idleness, and nights of heartless, vapid amusement, finished by feverish and unrefreshing sleep.

THE DEPARTURE.

Adieu, adieu! ye peaceful shades
That oft have charmed your master's view;
Dear native woods, and russet glades,
And winding streams, adieu, adieu!

It was on a brilliant morning in the early part of May that I left Wentworth Hall for London; and never did that charming spot appear in greater beauty. The trees, clothed in the delicate vivid green of early spring, and begemmed with the glittering dew-drops, which sparkled beneath the rays of the sun,

possessed all the attractions for the lover of rural scenery that the foliage of that vernal season always boasts; an attraction that is heightened by the contrast it affords to the gloomy, sterile prospects, recently witnessed. The aspins, with their light and graceful branches agitated by the breeze, and overtopped by the venerable oaks, whose brown and withered leaves were scattered around by each undulation of the air, appeared like the fresh and blooming creatures of infancy, frolicking around their great grandsires, and furnished a striking contrast between joyous youth and hoary age. Woods, rising over woods, were intersected by lawns whose emerald hue broke their continuity, and over which were scattered flocks of sheep, whose snowy fleeces, seen in the distance, shone like pearls. The blue hills, fading into air,

bounded the scene; while the broad and rapid river, winding gracefully through the park, reflected the giant limbs of the venerable trees that overhung its banks, or, broken into ripples by the breath of morn, showed its crystal transparency. Herds of deer were seen scattered around, giving, by their gambols, an air of life and animation to the scene. The birds sent forth a thousand notes of joy, as perched on the spray, or fluttering from bough to bough, they united in a universal chorus. The hum of bees, the lowing of cattle heard from a distance,—all attuned the mind to harmony and peace, and forcibly brought to my recollection Beattie's exquisite description of a morning scene; the truth and felicity of which now impressed itself on me so forcibly, that I was ready, with him, to exclaim—

"O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even;
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven;
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!"

I applied this appeal to myself; and, gazing around to take in the whole beauty of the picture, felt more than half tempted to send away my carriage, and remain yet a few days longer in the country: but at that moment my servant's announcing that "every thing was ready," decided my wavering inclinations; and, casting many a longing, lingering look behind, I entered the vestibule. Here were, formally marshalled, the old domestics, who had grown grey in the service of my family,

and who, claiming the privilege of age and length of services, were waiting to wish me "a good journey, and safe and speedy return to the Hall." Regret was visible in all their countenances; but the housekeeper, who, from having been a favourite of my mother, and having (as she frequently reminds me) often dandled me on her knee, thinks herself entitled to take greater liberties, with a voice faltering from emotion, and feeble from age, hoped I would take care of my health; and hoped, and hoped again, while a tear stole down her venerable cheek, that I would soon come back; for that, at her time of life, if I staid very long, she might never see me again. I soothed her with promises of soon returning; and, pressing her trembling hand, into which I slipped a note, to enable her to extend her charitable benefactions during my

absence, I hurried into my carriage, and soon lost sight of the venerable towers of my ancestors. Those only who have left a loved home can enter into the feelings with which I gazed from the carriage, as winding round the last hill that commanded a view of the Hall, I saw its grey turrets rising through the stately avenues that surround it: I was glad that there was no witness to the emotion I betrayed; for I felt that *mauvaise honte* we are so apt to experience when we give way to our feelings, as if they were a weakness we should be ashamed to indulge.

My vanity was soothed and gratified by the respectful attention which I received from the obsequious landlords at every inn where I changed horses for the first fifty miles of my journey. The owner of Wentworth Hall appeared, in their eyes, a person of no ordi-

nary consequence; and I was flattered at finding that I was so well known, though so lately a resident on my estate. But as I approached nearer to the metropolis, my identity was lost; and I entered it with the consciousness of my self-importance considerably abated.

ARRIVAL.

Fashion! to Nature still untrue,
Thy votaries veil her from their view;
And all her vernal sweets resign,
Amid thy heartless throng to shine.

It was on a lovely evening that I was whirled into this gay emporium of luxury. The postillions entered Hyde Park through Cumberland Gate, and proceeded as rapidly as a long-extended line of equipages would permit. I was perfectly astonished at the number and elegance of the carriages, and

the handsome faces and gaily-decorated heads that peeped from them were not passed by unnoticed. Every thing and every body seemed to wear the appearance of a festival, and I concluded that some unusual excitement had drawn this crowd of visitors to the Park; but on passing thence through the fashionable streets and squares, I discovered them almost equally thronged with carriages of every description, and equestrians and pedestrians of as various kinds. I was stunned and confused by the complication of sounds, and the noise, din, dust, and heat, that assailed me on all sides. I drove to Thomas's Hotel, in Berkeley Square, but found that every room was full; and thence went to the Pulteney, where my servant was told by a bowing dandy waiter that the house was filled; and he remarked, with rather a super-

cilious simper, that the apartments in the Pulteney were always ordered a month before. From the Pulteney I was driven to the Clarendon, where I was equally unfortunate; and I now regretted that I had not taken the precaution of writing to bespeak a suite of rooms. My travelling-carriage, laden with imperials, and covered with dust, rattled by jaded post-horses and sulky postillion, over the stones, from street to street, both fatigued and annoyed me; but, at length, I found accommodation at —— Hotel, where I was heartily glad to find myself in apartments that, an hour before, I should have thought very unsuited to the owner of Wentworth Hall. A certain air about my servants and carriage impressed the waiters with some idea of my importance, and procured me much attention, with many expressions of

regret that the house being so full did not permit them to give me better rooms. I looked round, and could not help contrasting the small paltry apartment I was now in with the spacious well-proportioned ones at home; and, as I made the comparison, I gave a sigh to the quiet comforts of the Hall.

The first few days after arriving any where is apt to be disagreeable, but is particularly so in London; and I know no situation more cheerless than that of a stranger on the day of arrival at a London Hotel in the fashionable season: the noise and confusion within doors and without, the general air of gaiety and bustle that prevails, in which a stranger cannot sympathize, the consciousness of being ill dressed and out of the fashion, as well as out of the routine of daily amusement that is going on, though in themselves trifling annoyances, and

which in other moments, when supported by solitude and reflection, would only excite a smile, are now viewed in a more serious light, and jar on the feelings. Ten times, during the first evening of my arrival, did I regret having come to London, and wish myself back in the quiet shades of Wentworth Hall; and the bustle in the house, and perpetual roll of carriages in the street passing and repassing, appeared unbearable, after the tranquil repose of the country.

I retired early to bed, and while undressing made many wise reflections on the folly of a life of dissipation, and determined not to adopt the late hours of fashionable life, and to be more a spectator than an actor in its amusements. How I have kept this determination, the sequel will prove.

The sun shone bright through the dusty

panes of my window, when my servant opened the curtain, and reminded me that it was time to rise; and his bright beams were reflected on a dingy wall, and glittered on some glazed earthen chimney-pots that fronted my window. I turned from the sight; and imagination flew back to the different beautiful and picturesque objects which the same bright luminary was now lighting up at home. A train of thoughts, little suited to London or its pleasures, now took possession of my mind, from which I was disturbed, by my servant informing me that Mr. Stultz the tailor waited for me. I wished Mr. Stultz and his fripperies away; but though I had the philosophy to form and express this wish, I was not stoic enough to send him away; as candour compels me to state, that I felt a strong inclination to profit by his taste and

experience, and to be made to look a little like other people.

During the time that I was dressing, Mr. Stultz reminded me more than once, through my servant, that he was in an extreme hurry, though I suspect that a wish of showing his importance was the chief motive of this haste; for I found him by no means impatient to end our interview, as he descanted most diffusely on the merits of each colour and pattern that he displayed; and begged leave to recommend each article, with a reference to its becoming effect on my person, which was done with a degree of tact that shewed him to possess much discrimination of character.

Having given Mr. S. a *carte blanche* for my wardrobe, merely stipulating that I wished to look like a gentleman and not a dandy,

he took his leave with many bows, promising that I should have two suits sent home next morning, at the same time protesting that, (but he begged pardon,) really I was not fit to be seen in my present coats, they were so very old fashioned, though he had made them only four months before; and the waistcoats were now worn with quite a different sort of collar:—in short, he discovered that my whole wardrobe must be discarded, which discovery seemed to afford peculiar satisfaction to my French valet, if I might judge by the smiles of complacency with which he assented to it. Hatters, hosiers, boot-makers, &c. &c. followed in succession, and occupied a considerable portion of the morning; and this momentous business being got rid of, I drove to my solicitor's, to ask his assistance in finding me a furnished house for the

season: this he promised to do forthwith; and I then proceeded to my bankers to arrange my pecuniary concerns. I found Messrs. ——— all civility and attention, and remarked the difference between their respectful assiduity to me, and their negligent indifference to some titled acquaintances of mine that came in,—a difference, perhaps, proportioned to the state of our cash-account. I reflected all the way back to my hotel on riches and their attending consequences, and decided in my own mind, that the philosopher, who considered money as dross, had never known the comforts of having ten thousand pounds above his actual wants in his banker's hands, and had never experienced the respectful attention it produces.

FORMING AN ESTABLISHMENT.

" In Fashion's circle if you'd shine,
First, let your riches well be known,
Give frequent dinners, costly wine;
Your merit then the town will own."
The ADVISER.

The first thing necessary to any one who wishes to be a somebody in London is to have a good house and to give good dinners: this is the surest road to a niche in the temple of fashion, and certainly an easy one to those who neither value their time nor their money. To accomplish this desideratum, the first step to be taken is to form a good establishment, and I therefore lost no time in looking out for servants suitable to each department in a first-rate *ménage*. Le Moine, my valet, offered his services

to procure the best *chef de cuisine* that his friend Monsieur —— could recommend; and my solicitor found me a *maître d'hôtel*, groom of the chambers, butler, under-butler, footmen, and a porter; which, with a first and second coachman, grooms, and helpers, formed the male part of my establishment. The female part were procured by the wife of my linen-draper; and the whole were to hold themselves in readiness to enter my service the moment a suitable house was found for me. My next object was to get a chariot and a curricle, and I was fortunate enough to find both at Windser's. They were but just completed, in the very newest fashion, for a gentleman, whose taste far exceeded his fortune, and who was unable to pay for either, so that they only required to have his arms erased and mine put on,

which was done with all possible expedition. My solicitor found an excellent house in Hanover Square, into which I removed the moment it was ready for my reception; and I was now installed in my town-residence in a style befitting my fortune and family. The only thing wanting was a set of horses, and those I determined to purchase at Tattersall's the ensuing Monday. I had kept myself retired since my arrival, not wishing to be seen until I could make my appearance with some degree of eclat. Vanity was the latent cause of this; and I blushed at the conviction, but short as my stay in London had been, I had discovered that the Wentworth of the Hall and London were very different beings; and that the sage reflections and prudent resolutions of the former seemed to have faded from the

recollection of the latter. When I walked out, I detected myself criticising the carriages, horses, and servants that I saw, and with inward complacency prided myself with the idea that mine would surpass them. A few days before I should have despised such considerations, but now they were no longer trifling.

On Monday I went to Tattersall's, and here a new scene awaited me. I had hitherto imagined that gentlemen attended this place for the sole purpose of buying or selling horses, and that one or two visits in the season sufficed, but I now discovered that it was considered absolutely necessary to appear at this fashionable lounge regularly once or twice a week; and I saw some of the grave nobles and senators of the land deeply engaged in familiar conversation with

horse-dealers and grooms, who appeared quite at their ease, and by no means impressed with any feelings of respectful deference for their noble or distinguished acquaintances. My aristocratic notions were a little outraged at the system of perfect equality I beheld; and I thought that the levelling system, so much dreaded and decried in the present day, must have first commenced at Tattersall's.

I met several of my Eton and college acquaintances, with whom I renewed my intimacy. Having discovered my wants, they assisted me in the choice of horses, and as many of them had gone to Tattersall's merely as a lounge, without having any precise object in view, they appeared glad to be employed. Others were so busy in making matches, and booking their bets for the

Derby and Oaks, that they had scarcely time to give me a nod *en passant.* In London, where money is the *primium mobile*, every thing can be had by those who are possessed of that necessary evil; and I left Tattersall's master of two sets of fine carriage-horses, and four saddle-horses, on which desirable acquisition I was congratulated by all my friends.

* * * * *

FRAGMENTS.

Youth should be clothed in the robe of innocence; but maturity should wear the garb of truth.

CHILDREN.

It is pleasing to behold the gradual expansion of the youthful mind. We may look upon children as little men and women, and trace in the former most of the propensities of the latter; but, with all due respect to maturity, children are often much more entertaining; first, because there is in them a freshness of mind that gives elas-

ticity to their thoughts, and freedom to their actions; and, secondly, because, though they have all the propensities of men and women, they have not, like them, the sense or cunning to conceal them.

More depends on first impressions than people are aware of; and parents should, if possible, be more careful in the selection of their nurse-maids than of their governesses. The former often lay the foundation of evils that the latter never can erase. It is from the first they imbibe that most detestable of all mean vices, cunning, which engenders lying and deception; and how often do we see a child emerge from the nursery, devoid of that freshness and simple purity which constitute the greatest charm of infancy.

"A child without innocence is like a flower without perfume," is, I believe, an observation of Chateaubriand's, and its truth has often struck me, when I have beheld the petty artifices so disgusting in children. If we believe, with Locke, that there are no innate ideas in the human mind, we may consider that of a child as a sheet of blank paper. But as it cannot long remain so, how careful ought we to be what characters first deface its unsullied purity! — characters so often indelible; — and can we, or ought we to permit them to be traced by a menial hand? a hand perhaps stained by theft, and the ready minister to the crimes and vices of its owner.

But allowing that the menials, to whom we trust our children, are not dishonest or vicious, how few of them are to be

found that are not ignorant and full of prejudices, and what security have we that our children will not imbibe the latter, however we may, by education, guard against the former? Who is it that cannot trace to the first impressions conveyed to their minds by servants the many false opinions and injurious prejudices of youth, which in after age they have found it so difficult to conquer entirely? Beware, then, ye who are blessed with children, how ye abuse the treasures committed to your charge, and reflect, that on early impressions depends much of the good conduct and happiness of your offspring.

SELF-CORRECTION.

Every one who has reflected on his own errors, and the difficulty of correcting them, will be ready to exclaim with Belcour in the West Indian: "No one sins with more repentance, or repents with less amendment." It has often been urged, that when a person becomes truly sensible of his errors he can correct them, but this is a very doubtful point. The errors unfortunately become deeply rooted before we are entirely convinced of their existence, and time has allowed them so to spread and entwine their fibres with our nature, that we can rarely eradicate them.

I have seen spots of ground which produced large rushes, and which the owner has en-

deavoured to reclaim. The surface has been burnt without producing any effect; the rushes again protruded their heads. The earth has then been turned over, but in a few months the obstinate rushes have again appeared. At length, as a last resource, it has again been dug several feet deep, and a new soil laid on, and by this means the rushes have been banished. Such is the growth of evil passions in the human heart: you must dig deep, indeed, before you can exterminate their root; and you must lay a new soil of virtue to prevent a fresh growth of evil,—so prone is our nature to germinate evil passions.

In eradicating the weeds from a spot once cultivated, but long neglected, how often do we find them so closely entwined with the flowers, that the one cannot be destroyed

without injuring the other: so it is with many of our errors; they are so nearly allied to our good qualities, and long indulgence has so closely united them, that the exertions necessary to destroy the one not unfrequently impair the other.

ON SIMPLIFYING SCIENCE.

I admire the good sense that leads a professor of any science to divest it of its terrors, by which I mean the multiplicity of technical terms that encumber almost all our sciences, and act as bugbears to frighten away those who might have an inclination to study them, but who have not courage to encounter what appears so serious an undertaking. Those who simplify science render an essential service to the community, and ought to ex-

perience the gratitude of all the encouragers of arts and science. I am always impressed with a favourable opinion of the understanding and acquirements of those who have the least pretension, and who are willing to communicate what they do know with clearness and simplicity; but the generality of people are so anxious to gain credit for their attainments, that they endeavour to mislead others, and to prevent them from being able to form a just estimate of the science, by encumbering it with difficulties that indolent people will not take the trouble to surmount. Divest the sciences of these unnecessary appendages, and we shall have fewer instances of ignorance than are now daily to be met with; and those who have only a superficial knowledge will not receive the homage that is due only to proficiency.

MISREPRESENTATION OF CHARACTER.

If mankind would judge for themselves, and draw fair conclusions from facts, and from the lives and actions of persons accused or suspected of crime, we should have fewer instances of misrepresentation and falsehood. But while people, from indolence, malice, or a disposition to credulity, give belief and publicity to every idle rumour, however improbable it may be, or however contrary to the former conduct of the person accused, we must expect that few events in the lives of men will be fairly viewed or candidly recorded; and, therefore, we should be cautious in condemning.

MENTAL IMPROVEMENT.

It is pleasant when one is prevented a whole evening from reading, to make amends for it by amusing and instructive conversation; for when we reflect how short is our span of life, and how much of that short span is consumed in sleeping, dressing, eating, and visits, with a long *et cetera* of frivolous amusements, we have indeed but a short time for mental improvement. And how frequently is even that short time interrupted by dull, trifling, or petulant companions, who, without any mercy, break in on our time.

We should, therefore, never omit an opportunity of improvement; for certainly the Almighty never intended that the powers of mind with which he has endowed us were to be unemployed. The best way to ensure

our own happiness, as well as to shew our gratitude to our Creator, is to cultivate to the highest state of perfection the talents bestowed on us, and to employ those talents usefully and honourably.

POLITICS.

I am no politician, thank God, and when I see the sad effects of politics which daily present themselves, I rejoice that my sex has placed a bar to my ever becoming a practical, as my feelings preclude my becoming a theoretical politician. We see families divided, father against son, and brother against brother: who that values domestic peace would barter it for politics? People flatter themselves, that they can keep their public and private feelings apart; and that a differ-

ence in political opinions need not interfere with private friendship. But they know little of the human heart who maintain this doctrine; or, they who practise it must have less natural affection, or more self-command, than falls to the share of the generality of mankind.

The more we regard a friend, the more anxious do we feel that he should do as we do. We are continually, even without design, endeavouring to bring him to our way of thinking, and at last our self-love, or pride, becomes a party, and feels hurt that our arguments have failed of conveying conviction. The angry passions are excited, and the firmness or consistency of our friend, which on other subjects we should applaud, we now call obstinacy or bigotry. He probably sees our conduct with similar feelings, or else, perhaps, views it with patient forbearance, as

a weakness. Either view is alike detrimental to friendship. The former causes reciprocal coldness, and the latter carries with it a sense of superiority that is mortifying to our self-love. Hence any difference of opinion on subjects which materially excite the passions is injurious to friendship; and politics, which so strongly stimulate them, are too often its bane.

THE END.

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